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MATTER OF FACT

FOR

THE MULTITUDE.

BY A TRUE PATRIOT;

Though neither a Member of the CORRESPONDING SOCIETY,
the WHIG CLUB, nor any Affiliated Society of Sedition in Europe.

We doubt not of a fair and lucky war,
Since God so graciously hath brought to light
This dangerous treason, lurking in our way.

SHAKESPEARE'S HENRY V.

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MATTER OF FACT, &c.

COUNTRYMEN,

I STAND not cap in hand to court your plaudits, or avert your censures. I am not on the hustings a candidate for your suffrages, nor in the tribune a pander to your passions. I have ever loved you, but you know me not at this moment, and the individual will obtrude but seldom in the course of the following pages. I write not on my own account, but in the hope of being serviceable to you; and if unsuccessful, I shall feel the pangs not of disappointed authorship, but of unavailing patriotism. I do not even hold out novelty to attract you; I offer to your candour, good sense, and sober reason,—facts and opinions, drawn from sources the most authentic and unquestionable. I draw the veil aside, and leave your judgment and decision to do the rest.

We have heard enough of theories and systems fabricated in the philosophical schools of politics. They have exhausted and refuted themselves, and their day is over; but though the means are varied, the purpose remains unaltered: the enemy has changed his position, but means not to quit the field. * Revolution is a term at present
dissonant

* The French Revolution itself is no longer held up so loftily to our admiration, as it formerly was, by the liberty men of this country. The en-

dissonant and harsh in the ears of an Englishman: lenitives must be applied to render it palatable to his unphilosophised (or more properly speaking), sober feelings; and by painting his situation the most deplorable, and at the same moment proffering remedies apparently the most moderate, he may by degrees be led to admit licence for liberty, revolution for reform, and the shouts of a rabble for the voice of the nation.

We have heard much of parties—of Whigs, new as well as old; of Opposition, of Patriots; we have heard their declamations in favour of our liberties; we have seen them exhaust their lungs in the recapitulation of our miseries, defeats, and degradations; we have seen them carouse at taverns, promote public virtue in public dinners, and spread its animating influence in festive libations. We have had impending ruin re-iterated to us from the great theatre of St. Stephen's; to the long fields of St. Pancras. No pains have been spared—no labour denied; and when the day of extermination arrives, we cannot exclaim—"Of this we have not been forewarned." But lest appearances, which are sometimes delusive, should have led us to misapply or disproportion our applause, let us fairly investigate the question.

In the political hemisphere of Great Britain two parties have long existed—those In and those Out of power. They have assumed dif-

ferent positions; but the nature of the system which they have adopted, and the ormities it has generated precludes it from being used as an effective weapon in their hands; yet let any man refer to the speeches in our Parliament, and columns in our newspapers, and he will find that no one measure—no one excess of France, from the year 1789 to the present period—has been recorded without applause, or at least without the strongest palliatives:† and though the general opinion has compelled individuals to reprobate them in succeeding stages, yet in the zenith of Robespiercian tyranny we had a Morning Chronicle to advocate its cause.

† Since writing the above, I find I have been guilty of injustice; one exception should have been made in favour of the Directorial Edit, which proscribed 20 or 30 Editors (in the revolution of the 18th Fructidor), and suppressed the publication of their Journals. This met with unqualified and general reprobation in all the papers of this country.

ferent

ferent names at different seasons; and though the object has been invariable, the mode of attack has been varied according to existing circumstances and the temper of the times.* In this country every man is a politician, and consequently each party was supported by friends and adherents. It was a matter of comparatively small importance to the people at large which side was victorious, so that the vessel was well manned, and the helm in good hands. But is this the case now? Is this any longer the state of opinions or parties in England? I answer, No. The ordinary means have failed in every point; ambitious men are not easily reconciled to disappointments and the frustration of their favourite hopes. The times are pregnant with new doctrines, and with enthusiasts or reprobates who would enforce them. Their tendency militates against all establishments, and against all habits; and though I would not willingly involve the

* Extract from a paper written 20 years ago, entitled, "Observations upon the Conduct of Opposition." This will illustrate what I have observed with respect to adapting the mode of attack to the temper of the times.—The present distinguished Leader of Opposition was *then* a Leader of Opposition, and Admiral Keppel his relative!—"The conduct of Opposition during the trial and after the acquittal of Admiral Keppel, is too recent in the recollection of the public to require more than a very general recapitulation—Their abrogating the old forms of the Admiralty, by removing a trial for a Naval offence to the Land, to accommodate their own purposes—their appearance at Portsmouth upon the occasion—their biasing witnesses—their carrying all the indecencies of a play-house audience into a court of justice—their soliciting the officers of the navy—their sowing discontents amongst the seamen—their parading the streets for the purpose of inflaming the populace, were such mean, scandalous, and unjustifiable tricks of faction, as can scarcely be paralleled by any example in history."

Had a certain gallant Admiral (Duncan) been thrust upon his country for half services—loaded with trophies by means such as those here described—or made a rallying point for triumph and disorder by his relation, Mr. Dundas,—an honourable Member (Mr. Jekyl), a short time since, would have been regarded, by his country at large, as an upright legislative guardian of its peace and liberties, for an attack, upon which, as it now stands, I own I have neither inclination nor temper to comment.

leaders of what is termed the opposition interest in the guilty and revolutionary projects of their new allies, still I do not feel myself at liberty, when roused by the animating and superior claim of my country, to acquit them of *at least* aiding and abetting the projected overthrow of all we have hitherto held sacred, by the licentious latitude they allow themselves in their speeches and conduct upon every public question. Ambition the goad, their patriotism (if admitted in the first instance) is overwhelmed in their party animosity; and to overthrow a Ministry, they would scarcely recede from the sacrifice of the country itself. If I were to add, that Mr. Fox has been for these last 20 years in the pay of France,* you would doubt the justice probably, and be inclined to impeach the veracity of so bold an assertion; but the pay of ambition is not gold: the adulating huzzas of a mob would overbalance the Bank of England, for the moment, in the estimation of an aspiring and infatuated demagogue.

When will men cease to be the dupes of declamation and assertion? When will men cease to hoodwink their perception, because those who are interested in their blindness advise it? When will men refuse to swallow the quack nostrums of a mountebank, because his Merry Andrew recommends them? Do you believe that the Duke of Norfolk a few weeks since, when by going rather farther than he meant, (the only defence, except indeed a few miserable quibbles, set up by his friends) was actuated by a spirit of patriotism, or regard for you? Or do you imagine that Mr. Fox, at the subsequent meeting of the Whig Club, when he declared his inclination to be involved in the disgrace of his noble friend, felt actuated by the pure mo-

* Let any man recur to the conduct of Mr. Fox, and other members of the party, during the American war, and he will find the precedent upon which that Gentleman now acts. He at that time spoke to the feelings of the French nation, and his success or disappointment uniformly met their sympathy and condolence. During the present war, his activity has again called forth their admiration and plaudits—he is the *first* Patriot in the world. Does the enemy lavish such admiration, or such plaudits, upon a Duncan, a Jervis, or a Howe?

tive of aiding your cause, or defending your liberties? * You are not—you cannot be so blind! His Grace never thought upon the retaliation he was about to meet, or perhaps we should never have heard such toasts and sentiments from the noble President. Ministry have, as usual, had their share of abuse for this retaliation. † But I will consider it as a measure proceeding from the throne itself. Let us take the case home to ourselves:—if we had a servant, or a dependant, who left his home to traduce, abuse, and vilify ourselves or our occupation, in the next public house, should we not, think you, feel inclined to dismiss him? And though no man can aver that our Sovereign has ever suffered his own private feelings to supercede the public good, or to interfere with public justice, no man can arraign his conduct in this instance. Nor does it appear probable that the regiment, which the temerity of the noble Duke has forfeited, will be less likely to meet the foe with energy and exertion, because their commander no longer reviles the cause in which it is engaged, or extols the virtue and magnanimity of the enemy it is to oppose.

Parties have gone great lengths before the present day, have done much mischief, have provoked much ill blood; but the perfection of

* John Wilkes, of patriotic memory (whose zeal in the service of liberty and your rights set half London in a flame—whose love for you knew no bounds, no limits—until it *raised him to independence*), was strongly dissuaded by a friend from publishing his famed number Forty-five; but he had studied the part he had to act, and well knew that such a publication could not fail of calling down the vengeance of insulted laws, and that the very shadow of persecuted patriotism was the never-failing parent of popularity.

† It seems rather extraordinary that Mr. Fox should in his zeal for his noble partisan, and in his indignation against this *strong measure*, have forgotten the removal of Lord Carlisle from the Lord Lieutenancy of the East Riding of Yorkshire in 1782, during Mr. Fox's administration, not because he had braved the wholesome restraints of our laws, not because he had insulted the sovereignty of the people in the person of their lawful sovereign—but, because he was not of *the Party*.

Crime enorme aux yeux de Sieur Fox!

Gazette de France du Vendredi, 26 Mars, 1779.

bold and licentious Opposition is left for our times. Measures have been condemned, and with vigour opposed; but men have not been held out to obloquy and popular resentment till this period of intemperate policy. Till now a Ministry could be kept in check, and the balance maintained between the powers vested in the Crown and the Rights of the People, without reference to foreign policy, or foreign example.* The superiority of the British constitution *was* our favourite creed, and all Europe confirmed us in our love of it. What

* The excellence of our Constitution has been so generally admitted by every nation, and by every individual who has impartially analyzed it, that it should seem needless to offer any thing farther on the subject. I cannot help however quoting the opinion of a very great man, in farther confirmation of it, who, though not an Englishman, has made our Government his peculiar study. "The first peculiarity of the English Government is, its having a King—its having thrown into one place the whole mass (if I may use the expression) of the Executive Power, and having invariably and for ever fixed it there. By this very circumstance also has the *depositum* of it been rendered sacred and impregnable. By making one great, very great, man in the State, has an effectual check been put to the pretensions of those who otherwise would strive to become such; and disorders have been prevented, which, in all Republics, ever brought on the ruin of liberty, and before it was lost, obstructed the enjoyment of it."

DR. LOLME *on the Constitution of England, Book 2d, Chap. 1st.*

These happy effects of a Monarchical form of Government compose the very evil of which our reforming politicians in fact complain. They feel themselves debarred, and their ambitious views restrained, by the wholesome policy of a provident ancestry. Our forefathers knew that aspiring men had appeared upon the stage of politics, and that they would still appear through every period of human existence; their endeavours were consequently directed towards a prevention of those evils which they wisely foresaw would result from the unrestrained views of aggrandizement and power. Is it then to be considered as a matter of astonishment, that this bar to the hopes of the demagogues, this bulwark of our safety against their intemperate attacks upon our liberty, should be made subject of condemnation, and be marked out by them for destruction? Never, sure, was the above opinion of M. De Lolme so strongly confirmed as in the case of the French Republic.

then

then has so suddenly metamorphosed our State? Whence so vast a revolution of opinion? In the overthrow of a great empire, and in the principles which effected it. But let us ask, by what invidious comparison we are to depreciate the blessings we so lately boasted? Is it that the Constitutions of France, which have successively arisen, afford a more perfect model for our imitation; or is it that we have at once, suddenly and unexpectedly, fallen from the spirit of our forefathers—that our wise institutions are annihilated, and that our system is inverted?—I know not which to apply, for each, at different periods, has been the favourite topic of declamation with the Party. For my own part, I conceive both very easily answered, by a reference, in the first instance, to the despotism under which France groans; and, in the latter, to the liberty which every man enjoys in this country, to speak, to act as he feels inclined, provided the laws which are representative of his own delegated power be respected. But a party in the country exclaim here—“ Our laws are doubled upon us—our Constitution is infringed by a multiplication of restraints.” This is strange sophistry, if seriously considered (which, by the bye, is never intended by those who utter it), that the citadel should be worse defended by the acquisition of new powers of defence! However, let us answer those who reason thus, by a simple recurrence to the original intention of laws:—They were, undoubtedly, instituted for the safeguard of the *good* against the power and injustice of the *bad* man. From time to time new laws have been introduced for the purpose of checking new crimes; still *good men* have experienced no additional restraint, nor have they found their liberties impaired. Excesses in the world of politics have of late years been committed, which antecedent laws could not reach:—
stronger

* Sufficiently illustrated in the State Trials at the Old Bailey. Upon this subject it will not be irrelevant to point out to your notice the *broad* and *liberal* scale upon which Opposition justice meets *every side* of the question.——When a member of Administration used (or was said to use, for I speak from newspaper report,) the term of *Acquitted*

stronger ones have succeeded upon this ground ; but *good* men have experienced no additional restraint, nor have they found their liberties

Felons, in speaking of Mr. Horne Tooke, Thelwall, &c. &c. every journal, and every Opposition battery, was opened upon him for this libel upon the Jury which had acquitted them. When the event of the trials in Scotland, upon certain other republicans (*in correspondence with those who escaped through the leniency of the English law*) was made known, a clamour more violent than the former, and an attack amounting to actual defamation upon Judge and Jury, individually and in a body, was immediately commenced. The health of these *Condemned Patriots* was repeatedly toasted at the Whig Club and Corresponding Society, and the verdict against them was made the subject of most severe censure upon the laws—a favourite topic of invective against Ministers, and of sympathy with suffering humanity. It may not be amiss to enquire why this subject has been so suddenly dropt—why this trumpet of alarm for our liberties has no one now to sound it, when so many mouths a short time since were incessantly applied to it? Perhaps there exist so many other causes of complaint, that this is necessarily thrown aside for their admission. Perhaps—but we need not conjecture—The fact, I am apprehensive, is self-evident: Mr. Muir, one of those *injured* patriots—those lovers of their country—whose efforts in its service the injustice of our laws construed into sedition, and involved in its punishment.—Mr. Muir, I repeat, is at this moment in the capital of France, inciting the enemy to the invasion of this country, and supplying that enemy with information on the means!—Mr. Muir publicly avows his hostility to his native land, and though his language is necessarily more open and bold, his principles are avowedly the same that he maintained when Government thought proper to notice them as inimical to our liberties, peace, and safety. He speaks of his *suffering partisans* in this country, and the Directory are taught to believe that their “ARMY OF ENGLAND may dictate terms of submission in London, and that they will find auxiliaries and numerous votaries of liberty, who await them there.”

Vide *Proclamation of the French Directory, 1st Frimaire, Nov. 21, 1797.*

This Mr. Muir is the man who has been openly supported by the Whig Club and the Corresponding Society, and has even been thrust upon the attention of a British House of Commons as a martyr to the severity of the law!

This

ties impaired. The spirit and purpose of our law is still the same, but the spirit of the times demand a more explicit and strong extension of it; and we might as fairly be told, that laws strictly enforced against freebooters and felons were inimical to the interests of society, as that the measures which Government has been compelled to take, for the security of the Constitution, were injurious to the rights and liberties of *good* subjects.

We are told by Gentlemen in Opposition, as well as by those who *profess* even stronger principles, that we are on the verge of ruin—that our resources are exhausted—that our power is at an end—whilst the enemy is every where triumphant—that an invasion could not fail of success, from the want of unanimity, which the present distracted state of our affairs has generated—that the arm of our Government is impotent, whilst the energy and effect of the French Councils hold the fate of Europe—and that the exertions which are now making towards a feeble defence are the expiring struggles of a once great nation. But you will exclaim—“Is there no remedy for all this?” There is a

This Mr. Muir was in correspondence with the *acquitted gentlemen* of the Old Bailey, the innocence of whose *intentions* is so strongly supported—by *their own assertion*; and talked only of parliamentary reform and universal suffrage. Yet is he—horrible to relate—now in the council of the enemy, an advocate for the subjugation of his native land!

You will be told, perhaps, that this gentleman *was* a good and excellent patriot; but that the oppression which he complains of has soured and converted him. Rare patriot! So that, admitting his judges were partial, and criminal in the discharge of their duty, and that he really fell a martyr to injustice and despotism, his resentment against a few individuals is to arm his soul against every principle of feeling and of honour, and incite him to throw at the feet of a tyrannical, unprincipled enemy, millions of his own devoted countrymen! These are the pure republican principles which imperiously call for the sacrifice of private feelings and passions; which estrange the father from his child—the husband from his wife. These are the principles which *Reason* propagates, founded on the rule of right and the law of nature, which withdraw our allegiance from our God, and unshackle us from the trammels of superstition!!

remedy

remedy proffered—prescribed to you by the very friends who have thus stated your case—a panacea that will nerve the country, restore your vigour, fill your coffers, and drive the enemy from your shores! —It is A CHANGE OF MINISTRY,* Perhaps you do not perceive how

* I cannot resist giving an opinion at *this* time (July 1797). My prime objection to any proposed Ministry of Mr. Fox and his adherents is this :— I believe their principles are *too popular* for the good, the safety, or perhaps for the existence, of this country under its present constitution. I believe that their design is to throw such a weight of power into the House of Commons, *by means of a reform*, as would ultimately mould the two Houses of Parliament not merely into a resemblance, but into the actual form and relative power of the Council of Five Hundred, and the Council of Ancients, I am also of opinion, that the authority and influence of the Crown of Great Britain would be reduced far below that which is lodged in the Executive Directory of France. I think the proposed Reforms *lead*, beyond a controversy, *to this issue*. I conceive that a Great Personage, in the case of a change of Mr. Pitt's Ministry, must be apprehensive *to whom* he is to be delivered, and *to what* he may be reduced. *The Pride* of a statesman's understanding, like Mr. Fox's, in the plenitude of dignity, will overbear all ideas of a balance of power in the orders of the state, and of the safety of the country, upon its ancient principles. He has declared his opinion; he must not recede. All will be sacrificed *to that pride* in a moment of phrenzy. The example of every state, nation, and city, subdued by French arms, French principles, and French treachery, is to be weighed well, as an awful warning *in this kingdom*, which may yet be preserved. The *encroachments* of such a statesman as Mr. Fox (paramount as he is in ability, & *in political eloquence*, beyond any man), are to be watched and resisted by all who think soberly, and are independent of party. Yet Mr. Fox neither could, nor would, satisfy the raving and tyrannical ideas of Horne Tooke and the French Crew.† They would make use of him to a certain point. They would *then* declare him an enemy to his country, and conduct him to the

† This was written prior to the famed celebration of Mr. Fox's Birthday, when Mr. Horne Tooke declared himself perfectly satisfied with the extent of Mr. Fox's exertions.

how this change would operate so beneficially; and I own myself incapable of assisting you in the discovery. 'This only I have to say to those, who, from a spirit of opposition, from party spleen, from weakness in adhering to men without looking to principles; or who, from their keen and sensitive affection for their country, *doubt* every measure, and *anticipate* every misfortune,—that, if a man, who professed himself my friend, was to take every opportunity of informing my neighbours, amongst whom I lived on creditable terms, and who were satisfied with my dealings, that I stood on the verge of bankruptcy—that I had sold all my valuables piece-meal, to preserve appearances, but that the last effort had been made; and to secure themselves, they should not fail to act upon this information; I am rather inclined to imagine, that, in spite of professions, I should no longer consider that man as my friend, and, surely, never consult or confide in him in the moment of real embarrassment. Nay, by the common law of the land, I might bring such a man to justice for the defamation. Yet in this first, this greatest cause—the cause of our national reputation, nay, even our national existence—political calumniators are suffered, with impunity, to vilify and humble us in the eye of our neighbours; to represent us as an easy prey to our enemies; to expose us as bankrupt; and to employ that liberty, which is the glorious attribute of our Constitution, as a weapon to destroy the Constitution itself.

But I have done. I have no quarrel with individuals; and when I name Mr. Fox, I name him as the voice of a party. As to that

scaffold. The security of property, public and private, is shaken by the proposed system, and a Revolution (which we never yet have known but in mere name) might then be at hand. A government which once relaxes, is not easily recalled to the vigour of its ancient principles. We have among us statesmen of determined and of true patriotism, and we have a King, who has courage, virtue, and firmness.

Pursuits of Literature, page 206.

The author of the above work is by no means an advocate or partisan of Mr. Pitt,

Gentleman's

Gentleman's private virtues, which his friends are so forward in obtruding on the world, we have, in a public survey of this nature, nothing to do with them. I have no doubt of them; but I fancy that, if such a consideration be allowed to weigh in the scale of public estimation, more respectability of character, more integrity in the transactions of the world, more punctuality in dealings, more domestic virtues, or more social excellencies, exist not in the kingdom among an equal number of men, as among those who hold official situations in the present Administration.

We are told, that by the weak and wicked conduct of Ministers, we are involved in an unnecessary and unjust war; a war of their own seeking, and their own provoking.

We are told that they have never wished for peace, nor have ever sincerely made overtures towards it. And we are finally told, that without a Radical Reform in our Constitution the country cannot be saved.

Let us, then, consider these points; and let us, for God's sake, judge, in some degree, for ourselves.

With respect to the unqualified and unsupported assertions so confidently made, and so unceasingly repeated, with respect to the first point, it would be needless to attempt a refutation beyond flatly denying the fact, did not the bold confidence which has accompanied it, and which Government, holding no club or meeting where the members of Administration might defend themselves *unchecked by parliamentary forms*, has no means of meeting or combatting upon fair ground, demand a more clear exposition. That France had, long before the appearance of hostility, determined upon war with this country, no man who has any knowledge of the subject, who has had any insight into the policy of that country, or who has no sinister end to answer, will deny. Had the British Ministry been as blind to the designs of France as Opposition seem to wish it had been, we should with justice have petitioned his Majesty to dismiss Mr. Pitt from his councils, and have committed him to merited obloquy and contempt. But the contrary is the fact. That Ministry watch-

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ed with a jealous and penetrating eye the movements of the enemy, and clearly saw that England was next to be attacked; that she was to be lulled into imaginary security by professions of amity, until the undermining system of division and insurrection had rendered the people untractable and adverse to meet those friends in arms who came to affiliate and fraternize with them

Fully convinced of all this, Mr. Pitt of course disregarded the demand of France to desist from making preparations for defence; when she herself, for months before, had been busied in fitting out her navy.* And though the dismissal of M. Chauvelin, whose intrigues and cabals in the country were too palpable at length to admit of further connivance, was made the plausible pretext for hostility, yet the fact is established, beyond all controversy, that the Americans were courted to a marine coalition against Great Britain long before the event of that dismissal.† I cannot more satisfactorily illustrate what I have urged,

* At this very period, Monge the Marine Minister, in his Address to the Sea Ports, declares the intention of France to fly to the succour of English Republicans; to make a descent in the island; to lodge there 50,000 caps of liberty; to plant the sacred tree; to stretch out her arms to her Republican brethren, and to destroy the tyranny of the British Government.

“† It is perfectly well known that she long since formed, and still pursues with the most steady perseverance, a system of aggrandisement in Europe; for insuring the success of which, it is absolutely essential that the maritime power of England should be reduced. Germany opposed barriers to her by land, which were also to be removed. Accordingly Germany was to be divided, and a maritime coalition formed against England. Of this coalition the United States were to form an important part; for though we had no navy, it was known that we had the means of speedily forming one; and that when once engaged in the war, we should be obliged to exert them. The great number of our merchant ships, in the mean time; the skill, numbers, and enterprising character of our seamen; the abundance of provisions and naval stores in our country; the convenience of our harbours; and above all, our vicinity to the West Indies, where the commerce and navy of England are most susceptible of a deep and deadly wound, would have rendered

urged, than by laying before you an extract from a work which more forcibly calls upon your attention, perhaps, than any that has ever yet been offered to it. The author, Mr. Harper, is an American; a man of character and high respectability, and a Member of Congress. He makes no assertions which he does not prove upon facts, and he attempts to establish no position without referring to unquestionable documents. The observations I have extracted fall in the course of a work written in defence of American measures, opposed to French intrigue, and can in no wise be construed into a party production in favour of the Government of this country. Mr. Harper has never been partial to this country, and in his statements respecting it, confines himself to matters of fact that fall within his own immediate knowledge, as illustrative of the universal ambition and ill faith of France.

“ With respect to England, it is perfectly certain that France was the aggressor. Besides the facts and papers which speak for themselves, the point is established by the positive testimony of three French writers, all well informed, and two of whom acted a very considerable part in the revolution, and in the war. These are Calonne, Brissot, and Dumourier; all of whom affirm that France at-

tered us a most important ally in a maritime war against that power. To cut off our commerce with her at the same time, the importance whereof to her, though certainly great, has been far over-rated by France, would greatly aid the blow.

“ Accordingly we find, that as soon as the Republic and the power of the Jacobin leaders were established, and before the war with England commenced, Mr. Genet was sent out with express instructions to bring about this alliance; and I have been assured by a gentleman, who about that time acted a considerable part in the Convention, but has since visited America, that this maritime coalition was early devised, and that “ nothing was wanting to its completion but the consent of the United States.” “ That consent,” he added, with an air of resentment which four years have not been able to allay, “ *was applied for, and was refused.*”

HARPER'S Observations on the Dispute between the United States and France.

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tacked England. Brissot was a leading member of the Convention at that time ; and when he was afterwards brought to the block, one of the charges against him was, his having been the author of the attack. He replied, that Robespierre's party were the authors of it : but he did not say that France was not the aggressor, which would have been a complete justification. On the contrary, he asserted that France was the aggressor most unwisely, and that Robespierre's party had induced her to become so. In his appeal to his Constituents, he says the same thing over and over. In this appeal, page 47, he expressly asserts, that England *did not begin to arm till three months after France*. He also says, page 60, " that a determination had been made to brave all Europe."

" In October, 1792, the Convention, as appears by the same authority, had ordered formidable naval equipments to be made, *in expectation of a war with the maritime powers*. This was previous to most, if not all, of those acts on the part of England, which France made the grounds of her declaration of war.

" Dumourier loudly charges the Convention with having driven England into the war, which he repeatedly declares might easily have been avoided.

" It must at the same time be admitted, that although the combined powers were attacked and driven into the war in their own defence, yet, when they found themselves engaged in it, and began to entertain prospects of success, they also began to form projects of aggrandizement at the expence of France. It is also highly probable that most of the powerful Governments became very little averse from war, when they found reason to suppose that France, by her internal commotions, and the universal indignation which the execution of the king and the murders at Paris had excited against her, had become an easy prey. It is not, however, the less true that France began the war, particularly against Holland and England, which for a long time shewed every appearance of desiring peace.

" England

“ England for awhile was let alone. It was not the season yet for attacking her, till Austria and Prussia should be exhausted, Holland, subjugated, and Belgium annexed to France. The maritime coalition, moreover, had not yet been formed; consequently the plan against England was not yet ripe. Correspondence in the mean time was kept up with the revolutionists in England and Ireland; open encouragement was held out to them, and their deputations had public audiences from the French Convention.

“ The British Government was alarmed at these measures. It also took umbrage at the proceedings in Belgium, and the attacks made on Holland, with which last it was in alliance. It complained of these attacks, and of the decrees whereby the Convention had made a formal promise of support to the insurgents of every country. The Convention justified the attacks on Holland, and assured England that the decrees had been misunderstood; that they meant nothing at which any Government ought to be offended, and were only to be executed in cases where a whole people, having resolved to change their Government, should call for the assistance of France. On the same day when these assurances were made, the Convention sent Commissioners into Belgium to execute those decrees, with instructions to “ to treat as enemies all persons, *and even whole countries*, which should refuse to alter their Governments according to her will.”

“ England, in the mean time, justly considering these explanations as deceptive and unsatisfactory, went on with her preparations for the defence of herself and her ally. France required her to desist; and when she refused, and sent away a Minister who employed himself in exciting sedition, war was declared against her. This war many of the politicians of France condemned, *because it was declared too soon*; and yet they confessed that France had begun to arm for it three months before England.*

From

“ * If any are in doubt of all this, or ignorant of it, they are requested to read the correspondences between France and Austria, those between
England

From this, and much other matter, which would be tedious and unavailing to repeat, we cannot but admit the fact of France being the

England and France, the speeches and reports of Brissot, and his Address to his Constituents, and the relation published by Chauffard, one of the commissioners for executing the decrees in Belgium, wherein he gives an account of his own proceedings, and explains the plans of the Convention. The reply to Brissot's Address by Camille Desmoulins, in behalf of the Robespierrian party should also be consulted; and Necker's Address to the French in behalf of Louis the sixteenth. Brissot, in one of his Letters, declares, "we, the French, must set fire to the four corners of Europe." Camille Desmoulins, in his reply, asserts, "that to *disorganize Europe* was "one of the sublime vocations of the Convention." Brissot, in his address, asks "what did enlightened Republicans wish before the 10th of August? (the day when the king was dethroned.) Men who wished for liberty not only for their own country, but for all Europe? They believed that they could generally establish it *by exciting the governed against the governors, and letting the people see the facility and advantage of such insurrections.*" But Chauffard explains himself and develops the system, most fully. "No doubt," says he, "it was the interest of France to raise and secure by *conquest* the trade of the Belgic provinces, so cramped by that of Holland; and thence to threaten and alarm the United Provinces, to place our assigns on the very desks of their counting houses, *there to ruin the bank of England*, and in short, to complete the revolution of the money system. It was the interest of France to monopolize, as it were, these vast implements of trade, these manufactories of national prosperity. It was the interest of France to weaken her mortal enemy, (the Emperor) to *cramp his efforts to aggrandize herself with his spoils*: In short, to mutilate the Colossus of Austria, by rending from him these fertile provinces of Belgium, for obtaining and securing the possession of which, he has, for ages, been lavish of gold, of blood, and of intrigues."

"Thus also it was the interest of France to mutilate the Colossus of England, by rending from him the colonies in America. And yet she tells us, and the Belgians, of her *disinterested services* in giving us our independence.

the aggressor in the war, and that ministers, far from incurring censure or meriting the opprobrium, which Opposition had so unceasingly

“ England and Prussia,” continues Chauffard, in the words of a speech which had been delivered in the Convention, and approved of by it, “ know very well that France had the greatest interest to substitute a popular and representative government for the aristocratic and degenerate one that actually exists in Holland; that *with the forces* of that country, France would *irrecoverably destroy the trade of England*, and by means of her navy soon command the Baltic; that all that would be wanting would be the renewal, in that part of the North, of an alliance of situation then become necessary; and, that an intimate union between France and Holland being once formed, *the supremacy of the English trade, both in the East and West Indies, would rapidly disappear*; while Prussia on her side, would irrecoverably lose, sooner or later, all her possessions in Westphalia.”

“ Here the plan stands confessed. The Emperor was to be stripped in Belgium, and the King of Prussia in Westphalia. The bank of England was to be ruined by operations in Holland, and a popular government substituted in that country, in order to place its forces under the direction of France, and with these forces, aided by her own, France was to destroy, irrecoverably, the trade of England in Europe, and make its supremacy both in the East and West Indies rapidly disappear. And all this was to be effected, by setting fire to the four corners of Europe, and exciting the people every where to insurrection against the government. It must be confessed that a project so atrocious in its end, and so abominable in its means, has never been conceived before, not even by the Romans.

“ While all this was going on, the Convention, in order to hoodwink England, was making to her the most solemn assurances of pacific intentions. It even carried its dissimulation to the almost incredible length of requesting the mediation of England to bring about a peace with Prussia and the Emperor.

“ A further and a very strong confirmation of these points is found in the date of the instructions to Genet, the manifest object of which was to bring the United States into a war against Great Britain. These instructions were signed January 3d, 1793; the supplementary instructions, January 17th, 1793; Mr. Chauvelin was ordered to quit England, January 24th, 1793; and war was declared against England, February 1st, 1793. If this

dismissal

ingly and lavishly bestowed upon them, have honourably maintained the dignity, whilst they consulted the interests, of the country committed to their charge and guidance. With respect to the assertion that Ministers do not wish for peace, and that they have never sincerely made overtures, what probability is there, that, had our Government been led to temporize with the enemy, we should, at this moment, have been in a better state than we actually are? Look but to the countries now subjugated by France—subjugated by treachery, betrayed by professions, and humbled to the dust. Had we fallen down before her, and suffered our independence to sleep, think you we should have fared better than our neighbours? Had we tamely submitted to have laws and measures dictated to us, or suffered Frenchmen to inculcate French principles, would the event of an invasion, or its success, remain, at this moment, a matter of doubt? No; our independence is our palladium; and that independence, once shaken, falls to rise no more!

dismissal was the occasion of the war, as France alledged, why those instructions before the dismissal? Had France been disposed for peace, as she alledged, would she, on account of this dismissal, have declared war within six days after it took place?

“And yet there are men, men too of talents and information, who remain blind to all this! Who, while France was openly forming projects of empire against all her neighbours, and openly pressing forward their execution, by every mean of artifice and force, believed that she was injured and attacked, because in the face of her own acts she said so! From a late pamphlet, published by Mr. Erskine, and containing an ingenious and plausible apology for the English Opposition, it appears, that he and his friends in Parliament, who certainly have high pretensions to ability and information, are still persisting in this error of regarding only the *declarations* of France, and wholly overlooking her *actions*.”

Extract from Mr. HARPER'S Observations, page 47.

* Let the present conduct of France towards the neutral and generous people of Switzerland, answer to this point.

Look but to Belgium,* to Holland,† to Italy, to Venice, the *neutral power* Venice, whose territory they entered, whose Govern-
men

“ * The Emperor’s dominions in Belgium being at a great distance from his other territories, and in the close neighbourhood of France, were exposed to an immediate and easy attack. They were also thought more obnoxious to the weapon of *insurrection* than any other country; for though they enjoyed the freest Constitution of any people on the Continent of Europe, except the Swiss and Dutch, some invasions of their rights, attempted by a former Emperor, had planted deep the seeds of discontent and distrust.—These attempts had been given up by Austria; but the jealousy and resentment inspired by them were far from being extinguished. These sparks it was the care of France to fan by emissaries and promises; and, when her armies entered the country, they were preceded by declarations, that they came as the friends of the people, to assist them in breaking the chains of their ancient tyrants.

“ We have already seen what kind of friendship it was which they had for the Belgians, and how the chains of this deluded people have been broken. *They have been plundered of every thing they possessed, to replenish the treasury of France, drained of their resources to support her armies, and are now subject to a military government.*”

“ † In the winter of 1794, the French armies having over-run Belgium, and being favoured by the intense cold, which covered the rivers with ice, marched into Holland. On the 20th of January, a few days after their arrival, the French Commissioners with the army published a proclamation, in which they told the Dutch—“ In the midst of war, we consider you as our friends and allies. It is under this name that we enter your country; we seek not to terrify, but to inspire you with confidence. It is but a few years since a tyrannic conqueror prescribed you laws; we abolish them, and restore your freedom.”

“ We come not to make you slaves—the French nation shall preserve to you your independence.”

“ Personal safety shall be secured, and property protected.”

“ All this was very friendly, and the Dutch very good-naturedly believed it; more especially as the French generals, when they were approaching the country, had constantly repeated the same thing. They, however, soon found their mistake.

ment they revolutionized, whose fleets they seized, whose treasures they plundered, and whom they assigned over like a bale of goods to the

"Seven days after this first proclamation the same Commissioners, having now been admitted into all the towns with their troops, and obtained complete possession of the country, published a second, in which they "formally invited" the Dutch Government to furnish the army, within one month, with the following supplies, viz. 200,000 quintals of wheat, 500,000 rations of hay, 200,000 rations of straw, 500,000 bushels of corn, 150,000 pair of shoes, 20,000 pair of boots, 20,000 coats and waistcoats, 40,000 pair of breeches, 150,000 pair of pantaloons, 200,000 shirts, and 50,000 hats; and besides all this 12,000 oxen, to be delivered in two months. This requisition they call "their *amicable* intentions," which they flatter themselves the citizens and the government will shew equal zeal to second; and in the execution whereof, they hope that "the slow forms of ordinary administration, and all doubts about the want of authority, which might impede the operation, will be carefully set aside." And they give the Dutch to understand, that, in case the articles were not furnished, *they should be exacted by force.*

"It was now too late to hesitate; the French had crossed the rivers, their army was in the country, and the Dutch had opened their gates to these restorers of their liberty; they were therefore obliged instantly to comply," and on the same day they addressed a proclamation to the people, informing them of the demand, and directing them to furnish their respective proportions. In this proclamation they remind the people of the "absolute necessity of furnishing the supplies, without the smallest delay, and of the distress to which they must expose themselves *if they manifest the least unwillingness, or even procrastination.*"

"This, however, was only the commencement. They subsisted their armies in Holland during the winter, took every thing they wanted, and paid in depreciated assignats at par; and finally, they forced the Dutch to form an offensive and defensive alliance with them against England for ever. The treaty was signed on the 15th of May, 1795. It obliges the Dutch to cede to France, "as indemnities," two of their most important frontier towns, with the adjoining territories, and one of their provinces; to admit French garrisons, in case of war in that quarter, into three other of their strongest frontier towns; to admit a French garrison, both in peace and war, into one

the Emperor. Look to Genoa, more than neutral,—a friendly storehouse to the perfidious Republicans: Look, I repeat, to all

of their principal sea-ports; to give France the free navigation of one of their principal rivers; to employ half their forces in carrying on the present campaign, under the command of French generals; and finally, to pay France, as a further indemnification for the expences of the war, one hundred millions of livres, equal to twenty-five millions of dollars, in cash or bills of exchange on foreign countries.

“ In addition to this, it has lately appeared from the statements made to the Dutch government, by a committee of finance, that, for fourteen months then past, the Dutch had paid two millions of dollars per month, amounting in the whole to twenty eight millions, for the support of the French armies. To these two sums add the value of the first contribution which was exacted in kind, and they amount at the least to fifty five millions of dollars, two thirds of the whole expences of our revolution. *Of this enormous sum have the Dutch been plundered by France, under the name of amity and alliance, in less than two years; and in addition to the immense amount of assignats they have been forced to receive, to the surrender of a whole province, of their five strongest frontier towns, and of a principal sea-port, and to the employment of one half of their troops in the service of France.*

“ In return for all this, the French have driven away the Stadtholder, and changed the government. They have not suffered the Dutch, however, to adopt one to their own mind. A convention was called for that purpose, a great majority of which was for a federal republic. The minority, having opposed this plan in vain, sent two of their members to Paris to obtain the interference of the French government. The French government did interfere, and the majority was forced to yield. The plan of government, which this great majority had favoured, was now rejected, and a different form, more suitable to the views of France, was imposed on the nation.

“ The Dutch have also obtained, in addition to all these proofs of amity, an offensive and defensive war with France against England, in which they have already lost all their rich possessions in the East Indies, the Cape of Good Hope, a great part of their fleet, and the remains of their trade.

“ The *easy conditions* granted to the Dutch were complained of in the French convention; and it was alledged, that the commissioners had not drawn

all these examples,—and let us be informed upon what rational grounds we have a right to suppose that our situation would

drawn from Holland all the advantages which the Republic had a right to expect. The commissioners justified themselves by alledging, that it would have been *impolitic* to demand harder conditions *at first*, because, in that case, the Dutch might have been driven to *resistance*.

“ Thus we see openly avowed and approved, the system of coaxing a nation into their power, under the pretence of rendering it services, and then plundering and oppressing it without bounds of remorse, under pretence of receiving a reward for those services; and this by a government which has talked to us of our *perfidious neutrality*!

“ Without entering into so minute a detail respecting Belgium, it will be sufficient to state, that the French entered this unfortunate country under repeated and solemn promises of protection and freedom. No sooner had they obtained possession by the success of their arms and the favour of the inhabitants, who were foolish enough to confide in their promises, than they put every article of property which could be of use to their armies into requisition, and compelled the people to receive payment in depreciated assignats at par. They next levied immense pecuniary contributions on all the towns. They ordered measures to be taken for compelling the people to exchange their money for assignats at par. They placed the country under the government of military commissioners. Finding that a majority of the conventions, which they had assembled under the pretence of making the people free, were adverse to their views, they dissolved these conventions by force, though freely chosen by the people; and this for the express purpose (to use the words of one of their commissioners, in the account of his proceedings) “ of raising up the *minority*, and destroying, or counterbalancing, the power of an *anti patriotic majority*.”

“ Having thus afforded “ liberty and protection” to the Belgians, having thus, “ broken their chains, and released them from the yoke of their “ ancient tyrants,” they proceeded to seize and confiscate, for their own use, the whole property of the clergy in Belgium, to the amount of more than two hundred and fifty millions of dollars.”

Extract from HARPER'S Observations, page 47.

have been different, or our country an exception to this general scheme of French ambition. There are none, believe me. I have no hesitation, then, in saying, in opposition to any unsupported assertions to the contrary, that the war in which we are engaged, was both just and necessary in it's commencement.

I need say but little with respect to the second point; viz. the insincerity of Ministers in their professions of peace — The contrary is so decidedly proved by the correspondence laid undisguisedly open to you all, that it would be an insult, instead of a defence, to attempt enforcing by argument what is so evident in fact. I do not aver, that there are no terms on which Ministers might have procured peace; on the contrary, I am convinced there are; terms which would have been met with avidity by the French Directory. I will submit them to you, and we shall then be enabled to decide on the extent of the guilt chargeable on our Government for not having embraced them.

To reduce those fleets which have defended our commerce and our independence.*

To cede every capture we have made during the war, and to confirm our enemies in the possession of all they have made.†

To appeal to the sovereignty of the French people in the internal regulations of the state, and to compensate (from the riches of Europe, which they pronounce to be concentrated in this island) for the expences they have incurred in the prosecution of the war against us;‡ and finally to overthrow and revolutionize that government, whose firmness and policy have braved their threats, baffled their

* Vide the Speech of Barras to Buonaparte, on his presenting the ratification of peace with the Emperor.

† Vide Correspondence of Lord Malinesbury at Lisle.

‡ Vide Proclamation of the Executive Directory, 18 Frimaire, (Nov. 21) 1798.

attacks, and maintained our independence.* These terms, I hesitate not to say, would have been treated upon, as preliminaries *at least*; yet I strongly suspect, and (for the honour of my country) sincerely hope that, though Mr. Pitt's popularity has by no means increased on the other side the water—on this it has not decreased by the rejection of them.† This then will not, I conceive, impeach the sincerity of Ministers in the negotiations for peace—Let us now then look to the last point—that without a radical reform, the country cannot be saved. We need no dictionary explanation of the word reform; it has been defined by its partizans upon innumerable occasions, and papers on record in the state trials at the Old Baley will fully explain its extent. Nothing short of a predetermined resolution to keep our

* Vide the above Proclamation.

† The Address of the Bishop of Llandaff to his Fellow Citizens, is in the hands of every man; and few there are, who feel as men or Britons, in the present crisis, who do not partake of his feelings and principles. An instrument, however, in the hands of Sedition, (a Dissenter styling himself Gilbert Wakefield) has dared to answer the moderate philanthropic patriotism of his Lordship (whose pen has never been taken up but in the cause of science or general benevolence) in terms the most illiberal, and in language whose intemperance is only to be equalled by the dastardly doctrines it would impose.—This patriot esteems us a nation of poltroons, and openly invites the enemy to an easy conquest.—He undisguisedly attacks the essence of our constitution, and our established religion.—He calls himself the friend of his country; yet unequivocally tells us that he cares not if we fall under the tyranny, and become like Holland a colony of France.—He foretels impending destruction, and glories in the (asserted) contemptibility of our force to meet it.—And whilst he lifts the name of a Buonaparte above the very stars, our own gallant commanders are loaded with opprobrious comparisons, and our troops overwhelmed with accusations of cowardice and disaffection. Yet, countrymen, this gallant patriot, this common friend to you all, this revolutionizer and arbiter of the fate of empires, would suffer invading armies to land upon your shores, patiently wait the result, and bow to them when they knocked at the door of his study—*Poor man!!*

eyes

eyes shut, can possibly blind us to the purposes of reform. Whence arose the French Revolution? From reform. Whence have arisen all the plunder, anarchy, and devastation, which the Continent of Europe displays to our eyes? From reform. Whence the subjugation of Holland, of Belgium, of Venice, of Genoa, but from reform. I do not affirm that there are no points in the public œconomy of this country which might not be amended, no individual parts of the system that might not be improved. There undoubtedly are; and as undoubtedly ever will exist some imperfection in the most perfect institutions of man. But is it the correction of them; is it, do you believe, the amendment of a few insignificant points, that the Reformers so eagerly pant for; points in themselves even on which these advocates for pure government are daily differing? Or are you so weak as to imagine, that such zeal, such eagerness, such enthusiasm, would be excited by a few corruptions in our national institutes? Why, in that case, is France groaning under the most heavy load of corruption ever sent to afflict mankind, represented to you through an inverted glass as the country of liberty? Why are her victories, her powers, her resources, held up to your wonder and admiration?—But to tell you, that republicanism encreases the natural energy, that revolution new nerves the vigour of mankind. They would enamour you with a name, and rip up your liberties with a gilded poignard. These men have been told that, admitting the necessity of reform, existing circumstances render the attempt at present pregnant with difficulty and danger. This opinion has been artfully attacked through the medium of ridicule, and hackneyed about upon every occasion, by the opposite party, as the plausible pretext of *corruption* to continue its career. But is there a man so infatuated as to deny the justice and policy of it? Would you, with an impetuous robber at your door, surrounded on every side by his banditti, stop to put your chairs and tables in order before you set about defending yourself? Would a man, on the brink of starvation, think of mending a hole in his coat? Or shall we check the energy of our nature, and yield to the arms of an ambitious and implacable foe,

foe, because we have internal arrangements which call for reform? Shall we fall to blows among ourselves, for the correction of a handful of evils, when the very existence of our country, the preservation of our laws, liberties, and religion, is threatened by an ambitious and implacable enemy?—No, countrymen, believe me, existing circumstances are inimical to internal innovation; but existing circumstances are what these Reformers have looked towards for the success of their machinations. In the hour of tumult, remedies are hastily adopted; and they know that the first step towards our ruin depends upon a change in our constitutional system. Hence the clamour against every department of it, and an appeal for reform, sometimes cloaked by an asserted wish of employing constitutional means; at others, with unprecedented effrontery and hardihood, holding out those of a violent and coercive nature. But you will say, Who are these that you speak of? Are they not Englishmen? Are they not our countrymen? Why then accuse them of seeking the overthrow of their parent country? They are your countrymen, I blush to own it, and your enemies at the same time. I would not use vague unqualified assertions, nor do I implicate all those persons who have lent their names to the party. I only blame *them* for giving weight to a set of men, who, unprotected by such authority, would long ago have met the contempt and infamy they merit.* Treason
and

• I shall make no observations upon the arrest of Mr. Arthur O'Connor, or his associates, on their way to France. Time, and the investigation of a Court of Justice, must decide upon the point of their guilt or innocence. I speak of him prior to this event, and this note was written before it took place. Mr. O'Connor was the avowed and registered editor, printer and proprietor of a Dublin newspaper called *The Press*, so inflammatory, so seditious, I might say so rebellious in its principles, and so bold in the propagation of them, that he thought it prudent to retire from his post in Ireland, to avoid the vengeance which was preparing for him by the laws which he had so licentiously braved. Yet, strange to relate, on his arrival in this country, so situated, so marked, his society was not merely
tolerated

and Atheism, principles unnatural and execrable in their nature, would have overwhelmed their abettors in the moment of their exposition. But ambition knows no bounds, and weakness is the lot of humanity. Many are drawn into the vortex for want of consideration, or of intellect; whilst others, to gratify their time-serving principles, raise themselves on the shoulders of their less subtle neighbours, and become self-created patrons of liberality, and champions of liberty: those I pity—these I despise. But the enemies of whom I have to speak, have not confined themselves to words or to assertions—Checked in their open career here, they have entered into the service and pay of France. We have traitors in the heart of this country, and journalists, who, I boldly aver, are in the

tolerated, but courted and cultivated with pride by men and members of the Opposition! I forbear a comment.

I have selected a few passages from some numbers of *The Press* now before me, that you may decide for yourselves under what head such a paper should be classed.

“ People! your masters are alarmed, &c. &c. Whilst they thought you “ disunited, and unable to resist tyranny, they reviled and insulted you “ &c. &c. But at the name of the GREAT NATION (*we have shewn you “ how great*) they shrink into their own worthlessness.—Already they hear “ its thunders breaking on their heads, and see its armies pouring destruc- “ tion on them.”

Press, February 17, 1798.

“ Green has been recently adopted by the *revolutionists* of Swit- “ zerland, as emblematical of the cause of republican liberty and union. “ It was odious to the Aristocrats, &c. &c. But lo, the French Republi- “ cans touched the territory, the Green Standard was hoisted, the patriots “ crowded round it, and it promises to overcome every obstacle. *May that “ colour, which has been chosen to characterize the cause of liberty and union by “ some of the best and bravest people in the world, be finally, completely, and “ speedily triumphant.*”

Press, February 22, 1798.

When avowed principles, such as these, (I have not selected the strongest) command the political accession and friendship of Members of the British Parliament, I think it were criminal to be any longer off our guard.

hire

hire of the French Directory.* We daily see them depreciate our successes, endeavour to wound our spirit, to depress our energy, and to give the death-blow to our national ardour. Suspicion would attach to these circumstances, had we no stronger clue; but the fact is too fully ascertained, and let them beware of their impending detection, and exposition in the face of their injured country. We have countrymen who correspond with the enemy—We have committees which have delegated persons to counteract the negotiations for peace at Paris and at Lisle†—We have our resident *revolutionary* plenipotentiary,

* Camille Jordan, in a letter to his constituents, lately published, complains of an assertion of an English Journalist who is paid by their Government, (page 43)—“De ce Journalist Anglois, soldé par notre Gouvernement.”

† Such a charge, some years since, would have excited a smile; but never could have obtained credit. In that masterpiece of eloquence and argument, the Speech of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, upon the late motion of Lord Moira, the fact was positively affirmed by his Lordship; not in vague or equivocal declamation, but upon absolute proof. The individuals even are known. But so insidiously has the Faction endeavoured to asperse every assertion of his Majesty's Ministers, as the offspring of their own alarm, and the fabrication of their own brain, that you will perhaps refuse credit to his Lordship even upon this well substantiated point. But to aid your conviction, I will submit to you this positive avowal by the writer of the official paper of the Rebel Irish, The Union Star, No. 8—After having marked out victims (gentlemen whose only crime has been an appeal to the laws of their country against murder and rapine) for assassination, by name and exact description of person, the assassin proceeds—“Irishmen! Your country “is represented by brethren of ability and virtue—they plead your cause at “Lisle, they negotiate for an independent Irish republic in the teeth of “that diplomatic spy, Malmesbury. They are countenanced and encouraged by the French Commissioners, and we have some hopes that Ireland will be seen in the political map of Europe, when her cruel step-sister “is consigned to the insignificance her crimes justly merit. Should some “unfortunate event put off your delivery, by England purchasing an immediate

“diate

plenipotentiary, in the capital of France—and councils which have their regular sittings, throughout this country, and Ireland, to remit and receive reports. Shall I, then, as a Briton, be ashamed to avow that the blood boils within my veins at the bare reflection upon such vile apostacy, such infamous, diabolical, and black treachery?

These are the conspiracies formed against you. They are clear and undoubted. When you meet them thus openly, you arm yourselves against them. The difficulty you have to encounter consists in opposing them in their disguised state. We hear much of *liberal principles* and of *universal benevolence*: these form the advanced guard, to beat down prejudices (as they are termed), to overthrow religion, and sap the foundation of our temperate and happy Constitution. To shake off all social and moral obligations; to loosen every tie of nature and feeling; to deny the existence of a God; and to brand the followers of Christ with superstition and hypocrisy, are the first data of what are termed *liberal principles*.§ To transfer the love of our own country to the whole world; to acknowledge the inferiority of our own possessions, whilst we extol the resources of rival powers; to consider men who are armed for our destruction as brethren, and every common feeling of patriotism as the remnant of

diate peace, you should not despond. PEACE WILL BE ONLY TEMPORARY;† it may be productive of some political comforts, as we may then openly praise and study the glorious truths France is capable of proclaiming. Communication with that country will be revived, and liberty will gain new strength, and knowledge be more universal; consequently Despotism must die, and Irishmen will go to the funeral!

† This Gentleman, at least, cannot be mistaken for an hireling of Ministry. He, on the contrary, is in the confidence of a very opposite party; yet a higher compliment to the foresight, prudence, and steady spirit of our present Rulers, could not, I think, be adduced on the subject of Peace.

§ Let any man read the daily effusions of blasphemy and impiety which appear in the principal Opposition papers of this country, and he cannot doubt the purpose of their fabricators.

narrow prejudice, form the broad and extended basis of *universal benevolence*.*

Be cautious, then, for these are traps for the unwary; and the most diabolical doctrines are thus plausibly recommended: but the poison, though rendered palatable, is not the less fatal. Talk of the horrors of revolution and anarchy, and you spurn the promoters of it; speak of the happy effects of reform, and you listen to the proposed advantages. But, believe me, at the present crisis, they are one and the same thing; varying only in the stages of their progression.

One of the strongest and most favourite engines which the reformers use against your liberties, is the endeavour to damp your spirit, and to impress you with an idea of approaching and inevitable destruction. They would disarm you by fears, and overwhelm you with your own apprehensions. Look around you, and you will see that treachery, fomented by the undermining arts of Frenchmen, has every where opened the gates to the enemy. The Corresponding Societies and cabals have been the instruments of destruction in every state which the French arms have subjugated; clubs established by the lowest and most licentious agents, outlaws and renegadoes, sanctioned (as we have similar instances before our eyes) by intemperate men, who have had some stake, some character to lose, but whose selfish designs of popular elevation have led them to join in the nefarious projects of their desperate partisans. Such characters rise in the tumult, and being checked by no means, overwhelm society with misery, upon which it is too horrible to calculate.

I anticipate an observation, which, indeed, very naturally arises from what has just been said---How is it possible that men who have such a stake, who hold rank, fortune, and character in the country, can be led to second opinions of a tendency so evidently inimical to their own interests. But I lament to say, that it is too easily solved: First, By the phrenzy of ambition, which blinds its followers to

* The same papers will afford ample testimony of this definition.

every thing but the object in point. Secondly, By a simple reference to past events---the Duc de Rochefaucalt and the Marquis de la Fayette, (without naming the whole phalanx of their noble adherents) men of the most exalted rank and distinction, sufficiently illustrate it, in having been the first movers of the revolution in France. How short, by the bye (as a warning voice to their English imitators) was their reign! How soon were these illustrious patriots overpowered, banished, or butchered by a party of half-witted abbés and country attorneys! In the present day (not to speak of the Dutch or Venetian Aristo-Democrats), have we not beheld the intrigues and treacheries of a Cardinal Pamphili, and a Cardinal Buon Campagne, aiding the cause of the enemies of their country, and paving the way for that subjection and ruin which now overwhelms deserted *Rome*.

Distinguish, then, my fellow citizens, your friends from your foes. Few, indeed, have you (comparatively speaking) of the latter cast; yet your friends are too easy, and betray not sufficiently that spirit of indignation against their seditious brethren (which contempt indeed may suppress), on the repeated detection of their unfaithfulness to ourselves, and the attack upon our most essential interests. Let the public voice cry aloud, and strengthen the arm of Government, to punish traitors and maintain our rights. Suffer not the insults of a small, but clamorous and daring, band of men to depress your spirits or impede your exertions. Spurn them from you, and, as a pestilence, avoid them. What has been, may be again. And, I repeat to you, every power in Europe that has fallen at the mercy of France, has fallen through the treachery of its own citizens: and though no country on earth can boast such good sense, or so exalted a patriotism, as pervades every branch of society in Great Britain; still, I sorrow whilst I say it, I fear we form no exception to the general rule---we have unnatural children blended in the mass -----we have traitors nestling in our very bosom. I would leave them to their own abortive endeavours, unpitied, unobserved, did I not perceive the intricate and subtle artifices practised by them on all sides---low cunning and craft, that too easily may entrap the unsuspecting.

suspecting. Were they open in their purpose-----would they boldly avow the principles of their cause----I would not disgrace those which I profess, by entertaining an apprehension British liberty, and the British Constitution, would never be degraded by an open comparison with republican despotism and French slavery.

I would prepare you against another description of men, whose intentions I have no occasion in this place to notice or investigate. I speak merely to the effect of their conduct upon those who are in the habit of being thrown into their society. Those, I mean, whose unmanly fears give giant form to every little failure, and whose shallow perceptions preclude them from looking beyond the present moment. They are perpetually crying out, that we are ruined---that our resources fail---our system totters---our credit sinks! Depressing thus the spirits of those connected with them; and adding fresh fuel to the hopes of the common enemy,—when the direct contrary of all this noisy declamation is the fact. Admitting, however, for an instant (which I am unwilling to do) that they were correct, such men, calculating from their own narrow principles, know not the native powers we possess, nor the renovating energy of this free and blessed country.

In the war of 1665-66, &c. with the Dutch, in which they were joined by the French and the Danes, they appeared at sea with a fleet of 113 ships of war, and 11 fireships, well manned, and ably commanded; they afterwards formed a junction with 40 French ships of the line more. Our standing army at that period consisted of only 5000 men, and we had no militia. The country was at the same time visited by a pestilence, which carried off 80,000 persons in the metropolis alone. This was succeeded by the great fire of London, in which 1300 houses and 80 parish churches were destroyed. Fate seemed leagued with the enemy for our destruction! ---Yct, BRITONS, hear----Our fleet, though infinitely inferior, met and conquered the foe. The alliance entered into against us was broken, and an honourable and advantageous peace obtained.

In the year 1690 the French totally defeated our fleet, joined to that of the Dutch, off Beachey Head. We lost 8 ships of the line, and the shattered remnant was obliged to take refuge in the Thames. The French remained for months in the Channel, and (*aided by English conspirators in London*) threatened invasion. There were scarce 5000 troops in England, the militia was not arrayed, parties ran high on the disputed succession to the crown, artfully kept alive and fomented by the friends of France; public credit and commerce were shaken to their very foundation; the enemy had taken 6000 trading vessels during the war; Exchequer and Navy bills reduced to little or no value; and the notes of the Bank of England at 40 per cent. discount! Here, indeed, were we reduced; here did we appear fallen, and our sole hope an appeal to the humanity of the enemy! Yet that enemy was frustrated in all its views of ambition: a peace was obtained upon most honourable terms---the glorious Revolution confirmed---the succession secured---*the traitors brought to punishment*---and public credit fully re-established!

Contrast, then, my beloved Countrymen, these statements with the situation in which we now stand. Where are all those evils which in former wars multiplied upon us? Where have our fleets been lost, or our armies made captive?---of which even the American war will afford us instances---that American war, which was deemed the most disastrous the country ever beheld; and whose effects were dreaded in the overturn of our political consequence---the destruction of our commerce---and the annihilation of our public credit. You still have at the helm the Minister who snatched us from those inevitable horrors (as they were considered by gentlemen who then composed, and *still do compose*, the Opposition), raised your credit, revived your commerce, and established your name from the east unto the west. That Minister merits the confidence you have placed in him, and will bring us safely through all the dangers which environ us at this moment. Be, then, satisfied with knowing, that you are the richest and most prosperous nation under hea-

ven;* and that envy at your high happiness has raised up implacable and avaricious enemies, who have loudly pronounced your existence
incom-

* I have forbore to discuss the subject of Voluntary Subscription. Such alacrity, such a generous emulation, has pervaded all ranks of society, to alleviate the burthens of the state, that it would be insulting to offer a farther stimulus to men, who, unsolicited, voluntarily and patriotically, have rallied round the standard of their liberty and independence.

I cannot withhold, however, an observation upon the fears which Gentlemen in Opposition (my reader, by this time, is acquainted with the various descriptions of politicians which I class under this head) have continued to feel at the idea of a list of the patriotic donors being laid before the public. This (as they themselves express it) would be *invidiously* marking out those who, from *various* motives, have withheld their assistance. This distinction may be invidious, but it is, at least, just; and when you view amongst the national subscribers, seamen, soldiers, mechanics, and even the most menial domestics, throwing their mite into the common purse, you cannot, surely, entertain a very high idea of the love of our exalted Patriots and Reformers, who, far from stepping forward in a crisis like the present, with additional aid, have retrenched their own luxuries and comforts, in which they have been wont to indulge, for the mean purpose of evading the common taxes which are necessarily imposed to meet the expences of the year. They profess, that they are unwilling to subscribe towards retaining the present Ministry in power; that is, they are determined to withhold all supply, all succour, from their country (however imperiously circumstances may claim them) until you throw the Government into their hands, and replace the present able counsellors of his Majesty with their own hungry parasites and dependants.

On the books at the Bank being opened, they with one voice exclaimed that the subscription was a farce, and its failure inevitable. When the books began to swell with sums infinitely beyond their expectation, they discovered the names of some leading men in power, which were dragged forth to prove that none but place-men who were *interested in the continuance of the present system*, had supported the contributions. When they found (and to their utter confusion they have found it) that subscriptions flowed in from all quarters, and that not a corner of the country but felt inspired with the cause, and came forward with their fortunes as well as lives, they again shifted their ground; and though but a few days since they loaded the Minister with reproach for having adopted so strong an expedient as the triple ass-

ment,

incompatible with their own views of aggrandisement,—who have sworn your destruction !

Be satisfied that your country's glory is increased beyond all former record; that your fleets are systematically victorious; and that you have captured possessions which all the power and machinations of the arrogantly self-styled GREAT NATION cannot wrest from you. Be satisfied, that though the utmost efforts of a provident and patriotic Ministry towards immediate pacification, consistent with the common safety or dignity of the country, have proved unsuccessful, through the counteracting treachery of internal, and the exterminating ambition of foreign enemies, still that day is at hand when—" They " shall sit, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree."—
THROUGH OUR ENERGY LIES THE ROAD TO PEACE—AND IN OUR RESOURCES TO CONTINUE THE WAR, WE POSSESS OUR ONLY MEANS TO TERMINATE IT. BE FIRM—BE FAITHFUL TO YOURSELVES, AND YOU ARE INVULNERABLE!

ment, they now, with undaunted assurance, cry out against him for not having pursued the measure farther, in preference to what they (with an attempt at malicious witticism) term a Mendicant Plan—a Public Begging Box. Those whose confined principles lead them to confound the passing appeal to our compassion of an itinerant beggar, with the liberal sensations which prompt assistance to a beloved friend, are most probably capable of reconciling such contradictions *to themselves at least*,—I own that I am not.

I always feel inclined to avoid, if possible, public disquisition on the characters of individuals on either side the question; yet I cannot satisfy my own feelings without contrasting the *refined patriotism* of the party I have above mentioned, with the *old-fashioned bluntness* of the following transcript, taken *verbatim* from the subscription book at the Bank—

" Lord Somerville gives annually, until the end of the war, the *fifth* " *of his clear income*, in full confidence, that when such a period shall arrive, " the people of England will see the good policy of having applied the *fifth* " of all ascertained income to the relief of the assessed taxes, partial in their " operation, because they touch not the *niggard* or the *afflicted*."

